



TLS

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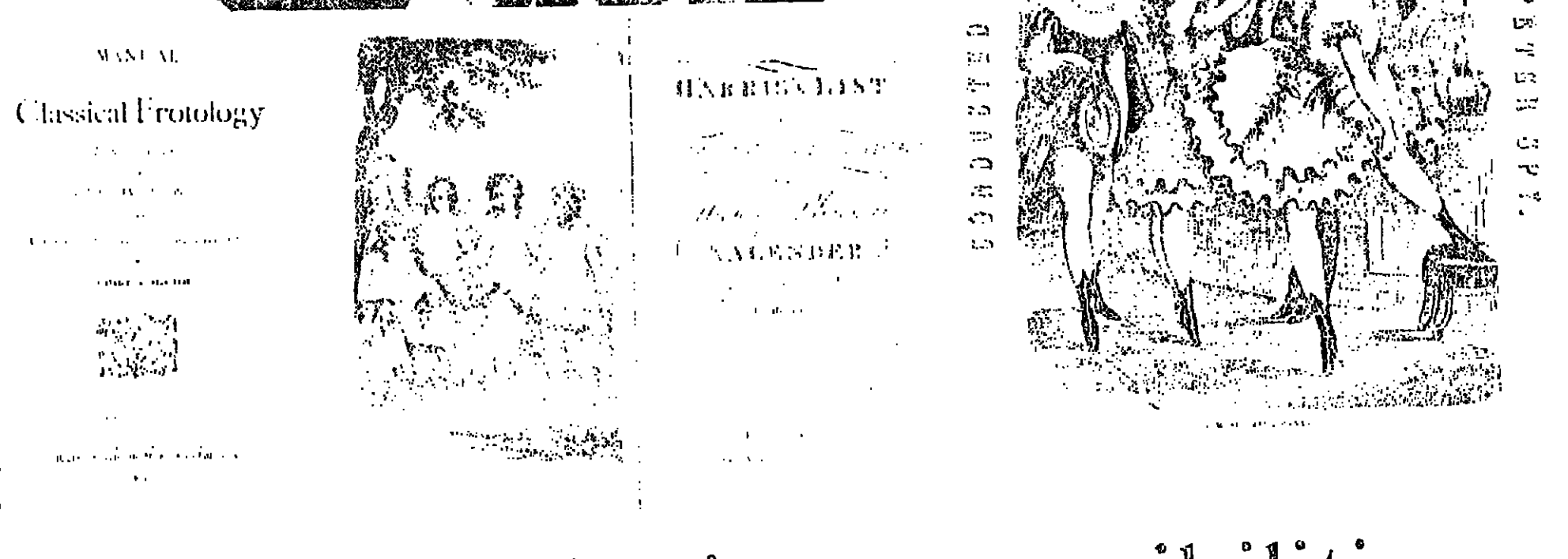
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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

THURSDAY 10 JULY 1969 • No. 3,515 • ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE



In words begin responsibilities

ASPECTS OF LITERARY CENSORSHIP IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

RONALD PEARSON: *The Worm in the Bud*. 560pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £3 3s.
CHARLES REMBAR: *The End of Obscenity*. 528pp. André Deutsch. £3 3s.
C. H. ROBIN: *Books in the Dock*. 144pp. André Deutsch. 25s.
DONALD THOMAS: *A Long Time Burning*. 546pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £4.

There are many American small towns in which hard-core sex books could not easily be bought, and the words printed in books are not found acceptable by all newspapers. Yet the climate has changed sufficiently for the words "obscenity" and "pornography" to be virtually meaningless. One of the books under review reproduces an illustration to simultaneous penetration, front and rear, is denied her or withheld from our view.

Such permissiveness is not universal. The trial took place less than a decade ago, yet in relation to the question of language it took place in a different world. In Britain and the United States "any scribbler" can now use any word and describe any act in a novel with little fear of prosecution. In many large American cities *Justine* and *Juliette* are on sale, and in some they are in bookshops devoted solely to sex books. But in dingy stores and tobaccoists' shops, devoted solely to sex books, they are not only sold but also advertised. In the United States, where ordinary paperback works are packed not only with de Sade but also with hard-core sex works like *The Spy Who Came from the Cold* and *Love and Lovers*, in the United Kingdom "sex shops" photographic magazines showing every sort of coupling are openly sold and sex films are shown, and an almost equal degree of freedom exists in some other European countries. And naturally enough, this freedom is not confined to printed words and pictures. And members of the cast of *Justine* and *Juliette* are not only shown in the New York stage or did they merely simulate?

Letters from Dame Rebecca West, Nicolas Freeling, Wilfrid Mellers, et al.

Francis Williams's *The Right to Know* page 743
Russian writing 744
Novels by Maurice Edelman, Henry Miller, Flannery O'Connor, et al. 745, 759
Two books on public schools 747
The poetry of Vicente Aleixandre and Anna Akhmatova 751
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imprisoned for his persistence in selling Robert Dale Owen's *Moral Physiology* and J. H. Palmer's *Individual, Family and National Poverty* (1880). Viceroyally was first fined and then imprisoned for publishing translations of Zola (1889), and Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* were destroyed (1909). There were of course a great many prosecutions before Cockburn, and Mr. Thomas makes a detailed examination of the operations of the Society for the Suppression of Vice in the early nineteenth century, and of the Proliferation Society who undertook the prosecution of Paine's *Age of Reason*. The basic idea behind most nineteenth-century prosecutions was that ideas which might threaten the mores of the ruling class should be suppressed, and little practical distinction was made in this respect between publishers of what was later called hardcore pornography and people advocating advanced social ideas like Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. The important thing about their publication of *The Fruits of Philosophy*, a work in favour of birth control, was not merely whether the book was obscene in the narrower sense of the term, but whether its tendency was to vitiate public morality, as the Lord Chief Justice put it.

Such an attitude was unacceptable to many Victorians, and seems all the more revolting to us because recent research has shown the very considerable trade in sex literature of all kinds that was carried on in the second half of the nineteenth century. *The Worn in the Bed* elaborates on this, and while Mr. Pearsall is a ham-handed and erratic guide to literature, classifying Arthur Maclaren and Ernest Dowson as "engaged in pornography" because they translated Casanova, the *Heptameron* and Voltaire, he has collected a formidable mass of evidence from newspapers of the double standard as it operated in life. Sexual assault was often regarded as trivial or comic when made on a working-class woman, but as a lasting social disgrace if attempted on a woman then distinguished by the word lady. He gives several pages to the story of Colonel Valentine Baker who kissed a girl in a railway carriage somewhere between Woking and London, was found guilty of indecent assault ("when this appalling story was first published a thrill of horror rang through the country"; the judge said, sentenced to a year's imprisonment and fined £500 plus costs. Baker was dismissed from the Army, and although he was later rehabilitated his career ended in a minor post as inspector-general of the Egyptian constabulary. "Colonel Baker had been spiked on the spear of Victorian hypocrisy as surely as if his head had been placed on Temple Bar," as Mr. Pearsall says with characteristic floridity.

It was essentially against this hypocrisy that the cohorts of defence witnesses were drawn up in the *Lady Chatterley* case, four clergymen including a Bishop and a Dean, the

one-time editor of a fashion magazine, a headmaster and a classics mistress, a special brigade of dons and literary critics, male and female, and a girl of twenty-one whose qualifications were, as Mr. Rembar ironically says, "that she was young, bright, female and a Roman Catholic". Some of these witnesses had remarkably little basis for making an informed comment on the legal points at issue, their presence merely testifying to the inconsistencies inherent in the 1959 Act and the usefulness to the defence of that word "other" which allowed them to testify about "other objects of general concern". The link that bound them all was perhaps a feeling that in 1960 the prosecution of a book by a greatly respected writer on the ground that it described sexual activities and used certain words in doing so, was so far away from the temper of the time as to be absurd.

Earlier in the decade five novels had been prosecuted in a single year, and although in three cases the defendants were acquitted, publishers (the highly respectable A. S. Frere of Heinemann found himself in the dock) and authors were equally alarmed. The 1959 Act was an indirect result of these prosecutions in the sense that if the "purge" of 1954 had never been attempted the new Act would no doubt have been delayed. The witnesses were determined to make no concessions to judicial illiberalism, to say nothing that would help the other side. Because of this determination they committed themselves to such statements as that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was a book that Christians, ought to read because Lawrence was trying to portray the sex relationship as something essentially sacred, that he was a writer in the Catholic tradition and that the book should be read by every Catholic priest and every Catholic, that it had great educational merit for the young, that it should be read and discussed in universities and in youth clubs. In relation to the book's theme the witnesses said that it treated sex as a basis for a holy life, or alternatively actually as a sacred act of holy communion. It was an antidote to the idea that sex should be regarded as a physical thrill, it advocated marriage and not adultery, was a puritanical book, essentially a moral tract, emphasized part of the Christian tradition. It was even said by one witness that the novel pointed in a prophetic way to the growth of Nazism and the dangers of Bolshevism. The prosecution case was ineptly conducted, and they called no witnesses, but even if they had been in a position to confront the defence witnesses with Mr. John Sparrow's article later published in *Encounter* persuasively arguing that Mellors had committed sodomy with Lady Chatterley, it is unlikely that many of them would substantially have changed their views. (One envisages a reply to an awkward question: "Obviously when Lawrence referred to the necessity for 'burning out the deepest, oldest shames, in the

most secret places", he thought of this act as the necessary although rather disagreeable prelude to leading a 'Christian life'.) Some of the opinions expressed must now be a source of embarrassment, but the point really is that English law as embodied in the 1959 Act is not a suitable instrument for dealing with such matters. As Mr. Rembar says:

The statute was a compromise and had the characteristically bad features of a compromise. The trial by jury opened the way to all the antics and irrelevancies that are perhaps tolerable in ordinary private litigation, but seem violently incongruous where what is involved is a fundamental question of freedom.

In America only two expert witnesses were called for the defence, Malcolm Cowley and Alfred Kazin, and their examination and cross-examination was in almost every way more relevant than the questioning in the Old Bailey trial. Mr. Rembar is not exaggerating when he says that the British case was a low parody of the American one (which had already been decided), that "the British defence was permitted to do precisely the kind of thing that those on the side of suppression attempted to do in our case—to influence judges and juries with irrelevant testimony", and that the case was decided on better grounds in America than in England. The trials of *Fanny Hill*, however, found witnesses in America as in this country bending over backwards in a desperate attempt to establish the book's ethical basis and sociological importance. John Cleland would have been surprised by Eric Bentley's discovery in the book of "a very challenging and far-reaching idea... that there are two situations in which Western civilization... one is called pagan and consists of the enjoyment of the animal part of our nature, and the other is called Christian and consists of the suppression of the animal part of our nature, and that the author's notion was through the example of sexual activity to arrive at some middle ground between these two extremes". Why could *Fanny Hill* not be called what it is, a lively and often very amusing sex book containing a minimal amount of non-sexual activity? Because to describe the book in such terms would have been to invite an adverse verdict.

It is evident that American law is at present much better equipped than English law to deal with the question of sex literature. In America, according to the Supreme Court decision of March 21, 1966, a book will not be condemned unless it is "utterly without redeeming social value", so that the works of de Sade although possibly "found to possess the requisite prurient appeal and to be patently offensive" would nevertheless be publishable because the ideas in them are of interest. In England the 1959 Act still includes the "deprave and corrupt" definition, and the opportunity of calling expert witnesses can lead to utter confusion for a jury

which may have to decide that a book is obscene and yet is for the public good. The various modifications of the existing law suggested by Mr. C. H. Rolph in his short study of the past and present position, *Books in the Dock*, seem only to be tinkering with a basically unworkable Act. The most important of them are suggestions that "books" should be carefully defined and then exempted from the operation of the obscenity laws, that the right of private prosecution should be abolished, that proceedings should involve forfeiture of the books and not imprisonment of their publisher, that there should be a time limit between seizure and hearing, and that if "books" are not to be exempted from obscenity prosecutions there should be a two-stage trial, the first on the obscenity question alone, and then if the book had been found obscene a second trial involving literary merit and public good. Some of these ideas are plainly sensible, others like the attempt to define "books" seem impracticable—who would make the definition? And of the two-stage trial, in which the same jury (or juries) would consider the literary merit of a book they had already found to be obscene, it must be said that it seems likely to weigh the scales against acquittal in the second trial as surely as any procedure that could be devised.

The purely legal position is that the well-intentioned 1959 Act causes hopeless confusion in practice. Some ruthless simplification of it along the lines of American law would be immensely helpful both to the Director of Public Prosecutions and to any defending publisher. The "deprave and corrupt" definition should be abandoned, and the scope of expert evidence made plain. Such an Act by its clarity would do much to silence the present unrealistic cry for specially literate juries or Lord Goodman's idea that manuscripts could be submitted to a Home Office committee of specially selected "literate persons" for vetting before publication. From a legal point of view adoption of the American system in some modified version would be infinitely preferable to what we have now.

From a legal point of view, but the problem of sex literature extends outside purely legal considerations, and the present legal confusion in Britain is a faithful reflection of confusion in society. The written and spoken word is part of the social fabric, and what is written or said may damage the nature of that fabric. Those who believe that books can corrupt individuals at least give more importance to literature than those who say that nothing of the kind is possible, for if books cannot corrupt neither can they ennoble. If we are to say that nobody can be seriously influenced by reading the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* or other anti-Semitic literature, or seeing anti-Negro or anti-Oriental sex strip cartoons, then it must logically

be said that they are unimproved by reading. Mr. Rolph's *Prelude* or seeing "spears" or Brecht's play is not to agree with him, say that the reading of books tortures decisively influences. Moors murderers, or that if such books should be banned who sucked his victims' blood, his first vampire longing watching an Anglican High service. No general case should be drawn from the words, pictures or rituals of paths. The influence of a society is subtle, complex and bound up with the influence of social forms and technical devices upon art. The case of shows clearly this. More than any other English writer of his time Dickens was the social and mechanical of the railways helped to shape what he wrote—but little value. The Danish ships exist, they themselves then played in changing the ethos of the and affected the way that its satisfaction. If the satirists were thought not merely about the social causes but about the class structure. Yet Dickens always within the pattern society, making no conscious, to outrage it by his own behaviour. Artists today are to use their freedom of the society and place themselves, rather than with any change it.

The specific question of in political comment lies out of scope of this article, but Thomas points out in his book, our present free speech and writing is not political. As the of *Private Eye* have found, to comment on public figures no means so great now as the latter part of the nineteenth century. Nobody today would write as Junius did about the Family, nobody would be criticized living people in the used in 1810 about the New York: "A prodigious, licentious, Debauchee, and Adulterer". Attempts to criticize the editor of the *North American* in personal terms have effectively stifled. The Official Act and D Notices are used stop discussion of an unbecoming subject, as in the case of the Black Diaries. The *Private Eye*, *Black Dwarf* and periodicals to publicize what find unprintable should be with sympathy, even those descend often to childish abuse an indication of the very nature of the sexual revolution last decade that its chief political freedom of speech concern is with sexual freedom should we have?

This is a question of principle, yet principles are always to practical considerations. The press in Britain is cordially disliked, as debates in Parliament and damages in the courts amply demonstrate, yet in no country does it enjoy a more addictive following. Its sins may be as scarlet as prime ministers sometimes believe, not without cause, but its columns are undoubtedly read. It is a pity that Lord Francis-Williams has not applied his unequalled knowledge and experience to a starker confrontation with this enigma, in which may lurk the seed of more than just the future of newspapers. That love-hate relationship, like so many of the clichés of our time, is true. Part whipping-boy, part distorting mirror, the press uniquely reflects a significant, self-punishing urge in our society.

One constant complaint is that it furiously resents criticism while being far too reluctant to look at itself objectively. This service *The Right to Know* usefully helps to provide, from the viewpoint of one of our most distinguished and dedicated journalists. Unfortunately the virtues of the press have offended as well as its vices, not least in the way of a sloganizing pomposity of which Lord Francis-Williams is himself far from guiltless. To be told that newspapers are the "ground troops of democracy" sounds fine, to newspapersmen. To learn further that they will never be ousted by the newer media, and will "continue to be needed on the ramparts of civilization" will make them happier still, whatever the casualties among individual journalists. The best slogans always comforting as well as uplifting, about "all the news that's fit to print" sounds equally good until we reflect that it may be the unfit that we really need to know.

observation of common decency is such a consideration. The phrase is not susceptible of any permanent definition but it exists in any given time and place, and the proponents of sexual freedom often ignore it. It is stupid to disregard obvious facts, such as the fact that sex acts for acts of extreme violence and brutality) described in a book are one thing, and sex acts performed on screen or in public quite another. When Mr. Kenneth Tynan, an intelligent man capable of saying silly things, tells us that he sees nothing in the sexual act being performed on the stage, possibly between an old man and a young girl, he is simply ignoring the nature of the society in which he lives. When people point to the example of Denmark and suggest explicitly or by implication that the social and mechanical of the railways helped to shape what he wrote—but little value. The Danish ships exist, they themselves then played in changing the ethos of the and affected the way that its satisfaction. If the satirists were thought not merely about the social causes but about the class structure. Yet Dickens always within the pattern society, making no conscious, to outrage it by his own behaviour. Artists today are to use their freedom of the society and place themselves, rather than with any change it.

The specific question of in political comment lies out of scope of this article, but Thomas points out in his book, our present free speech and writing is not political. As the of *Private Eye* have found, to comment on public figures no means so great now as the latter part of the nineteenth century. Nobody today would write as Junius did about the Family, nobody would be criticized living people in the used in 1810 about the New York: "A prodigious, licentious, Debauchee, and Adulterer". Attempts to criticize the editor of the *North American* in personal terms have effectively stifled. The Official Act and D Notices are used stop discussion of an unbecoming subject, as in the case of the Black Diaries. The *Private Eye*, *Black Dwarf* and periodicals to publicize what find unprintable should be with sympathy, even those descend often to childish abuse an indication of the very nature of the sexual revolution last decade that its chief political freedom of speech concern is with sexual freedom should we have?

This is a question of principle, yet principles are always to practical considerations. The press in Britain is cordially disliked, as debates in Parliament and damages in the courts amply demonstrate, yet in no country does it enjoy a more addictive following. Its sins may be as scarlet as prime ministers sometimes believe, not without cause, but its columns are undoubtedly read. It is a pity that Lord Francis-Williams has not applied his unequalled knowledge and experience to a starker confrontation with this enigma, in which may lurk the seed of more than just the future of newspapers. That love-hate relationship, like so many of the clichés of our time, is true. Part whipping-boy, part distorting mirror, the press uniquely reflects a significant, self-punishing urge in our society.

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for social freedom, as Norman Mailer has recognized. It is probable that very few people wish to see a state of affairs in which total public sexual freedom is permitted and what is now regarded as common decency ignored, in which (for example) copulation, defecation, urination were freely carried on in public. Mr. Rolph, Mr. Rembar and Mr. Mailer, who contributes a most perceptive foreword to Mr. Rembar's book, all voice their doubts about this. If we accept that the concept of privacy is one of the positive virtues marking the emergence of man as a civilized animal we shall agree with Mr. Rolph's postscript:

Am the various forms of mass communication combining now to annihilate our personal integrity? Privacy is the part of the human condition that has taken the longest to grow: the process must have begun, in a very small way, soon after we came down from the trees. Apes built and built no lavatories. There could have been little privacy in the forest clearings where the early hominids slept, loved and scratched. By Victoria's time, privacy was a civil right as inalienable as a decent funeral; even the very poor contrived to get as much as they could. It could hardly last, but it was the apex of the privacy graph: if there was to be a change it would only be downwards, less privacy and less down towards the long-lost status of the ape.

And with Mr. Mailer in his foreword:

A war has been won. Writers like myself can no longer write about any subject, if it is sexual, and we are explicit, no matter, the American writer has his freedom. . . . We can all congratulate ourselves.

(Rembar) is, however, as I would remind you, a moral man, and so I was pleased to see as I read that he was not a libertine, but a man of letters. The liberties won, just indeed as I am troubled. For back of the ages of censorship and the comedies of community hypocrisy, there still exist, the last defence of the censor, the uneducated argument which must urge that they can have any effect by becoming santly or other drop-outs, or by outraging bourgeois susceptibilities in the cinema or theatre. Sexual freedom of any real interest must be closely linked with social freedom, and the present campaign for total sexual freedom in literature and in action is in many ways a substitute

The current uses of the new freedom are not all to the good. There is an ease on our culture. Books enter the best-seller list diminished only by the fact that once they would have put

their publishers in gaol. Advertising plays upon conspicuousness in ways that range from foolish to fraudulent. Theatre marqueses promise surrogate thrills, and the movies themselves, even some of the good ones, include "during scenes" "nude" is a child's word, that have no meaning except at the box office. Second-hand Freud gives the film director a line on which to hang his heroine's clothes, psychoanalytic clichés create his reputation as philosopher-poet, while shots of skin insure his salubry. Television commercialized peddle sex with an idiot slyness.

It is not the intention of Rolph, Mailer, Rembar, to give comfort to the Citizens for Decent Literature (in America) or to Mrs. Whitehouse and her legions in this country. Not is that the object of this article. Writing will remain free for a sufficient time, some balance will be restored "to quote Mr. Rembar again. The hard-core books in the drug stores, the exorcises in the body of freedom, will disappear in time. The gains that have been made, the liberties that have been won, are of enormous value in helping us to understand the nature of the modern world and of human psychology. It is proper that the writer should have freedom to use any words and describe any actions. Without such freedom today the serious artist must be hampered in any attempt to influence and improve, or even to describe, his society. But in words begin responsibilities. Writers, dramatists, film-makers, need to show a bit of sense in using their freedom. The sort of anti-intellectualism exemplified among many students and some of their elders by the present cult of instant sensation, instant art, instant revolution, can play no part in changing society, and if it is pursued far enough will bring the whole force of the state down to crush the freedom, so painfully won. In America novelists, dramatists, visual artists dealing with sex are free, in England novelists and dramatists have now a high degree of freedom. I really, what we now need in this country is something as near to the present American law as possible. Morally, artist should be their own censors. There is every reason to suppose that they will be if a minority of artists and intellectuals stop trying to use art as a smugly's substitute for a non-existent social revolution.

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Read all about it

FRANCIS WILLIAMS: *The Right to Know: The Rise of the World Press*. 336pp. Longmans. £2 10s.

The press in Britain is cordially disliked, as debates in Parliament and damages in the courts amply demonstrate, yet in no country does it enjoy a more addictive following. Its sins may be as scarlet as prime ministers sometimes believe, not without cause, but its columns are undoubtedly read. It is a pity that Lord Francis-Williams has not applied his unequalled knowledge and experience to a starker confrontation with this enigma, in which may lurk the seed of more than just the future of newspapers. That love-hate relationship, like so many of the clichés of our time, is true. Part whipping-boy, part distorting mirror, the press uniquely reflects a significant, self-punishing urge in our society.

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Too audacious? Too respectable? Floundering in some untenable limbo between the two? Perhaps the press cannot hope to win in the public esteem stakes. Perhaps it should not try. The historical part of the survey, capably organizing a vast amount of complex information, shows how hard it must have always been to paper to hold any valid stance between over-decorum and excessive zeal. The great old editors were scarcely moral gold all through. The Victorian enlightenment tended to keep its coal-lamps fastidiously clear of the murky tide of real discontent in Britain: revolution would never do. In a more ebullient society the American crusader ("Robin Hood of the pen" as Lord Francis-Williams put it) eagerly sought dragons to slay; but for a newspaper to demand a declaration of war as the *Hearst's Morning Journal* did, might be thought to have been going a bit far.

Everywhere the slogans flourished like ethical headlines and some have worn better than others. Do we still regard, as Scott commanded? Do we require our newspapers to be as "clean, dignified, trustworthy" as Adolph Ochs insisted on keeping his *New York Times*? Such terms are more ambiguous than they used to be, and hindsight makes them look hardly more auspicious than the "first daily newspaper for gentlemen" label which surprisingly launched the *Daily Mirror*. (There turned out to be only 25,000 such ladies available each day; a demure springboard for what was to become the world's biggest daily circulation.) The suburban pussycats bred the paper tigers, and Lord Francis-Williams has a vivid new slant on the deposing of Cecil King, whom he seeks as having unaccountably reverted to the jungle after setting out as a modern managerial figure. Suddenly committing himself and his entire organization to a personal

vendetta against Harold Wilson, Mr. King charged to the attack like "a blindfolded bison with a grudge turned loose in a liquor store in the dark". Lord Francis-Williams likes to amuse us, and no doubt himself, with the occasional scarlet phrase.

Well, horns get broken when the monarchs clash. It is when the journalists and politicians get too friendly, when these traditional enemies show an unnatural urge to lie down at the jungle pool together, that people need to start worrying. The task of journalists in keeping a public even minimally informed is not likely to grow easier. As the decision-making processes of government get more complex the politicians naturally become ever less tolerant of intrusion. In his important chapter headed "The Plague of Secrecy", Lord Francis-Williams is rightly concerned about these tendencies, but the real danger lies in their growing public acceptance. "The right to know" may, if we don't watch it, go by default.

The reality is starker than any slogans, and it is as irrelevant to moralize about the Government's outrageous lust for secrecy as it is to accuse over-zealous journalists of not minding their own business. When is that justifiably their Whitehall formula "not in the public interest" itself not in the public interest? Where are the lines to be drawn? We have not yet gone to the point where the rules can safely be laid down in the abstract. And we are still far from the point, despite the author's warning, that "the excesses of the worst reflect upon the best", where newspapers can safely compete with each other in the seaminess of their behaviour.

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Ceremonial cults

VLADIMIR SOLOUKHIN: *Tretya okhota*. 204pp. Moscow: Sovetskaya Rossiya. 47 kops.
 RASHI GAMZATOV: *Mai Dagestan*. 255pp. Translated from the Avar by Vladimir Soloukhin. Moscow: M.O. Odaya Gvardiya. 67 kops.
 KORNEI CHUKOVSKY: *Fyskoye iskaystvo*. 382pp. Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel. 92 kops.

The third kind of chase to which Soloukhin's title refers, and which he puts next after shooting and fishing, is hunting for mushrooms. This is a favourite and legendary Russian occupation, and usually means taking to the pine-woods in August, although there are of course varieties to be found at other times and in other places. He claims that one can find in central Russia about 200 varieties of mushroom, of which only six are poisonous and a further fourteen inedible.

Asksay in the late nineteenth century began a literary treatise on mushrooms, but got no farther than a few pages. These are enough to give Soloukhin a jumping-off point for the sort of book that is still well done in Russia and in the West scarcely now done at all: a mixed speculative, informative, anecdotal book that nevertheless aims at literary form, a sort of *Complete Angler* of the mushroom glades.

There are stories of giant mushrooms found recently in Vladimir province, discussions of why certain species grow only under birch trees, others under aspen trees; descriptions of the four ways of preserving them (which incidentally must be economically dried, salted and marinated. Also there is incidental discussion on the merits of the various wild berries there is perhaps another whole book for Soloukhin, on the Soviet peasant's diverse use of trees, on birch twigs and the Russian steam bath, and, of course, on how mushrooms should be eaten with vodka, and how that vodka should have stood for some time with one of the traditional taste-givers (again they can be berries) in the carafe. The most important thing, he adds, is to have good people with you for the occasion.

Here, without being ponderous, we see where the whole cult of mushrooms fits in: it is part of the old Russian festive, ceremonial, country tradition. And since grace and ceremony are things that are noticeably lacking in Soviet life, on the street, the old Russian festive ethos has a particular attraction for the Russian intelligentsia. It is also something concrete and human amid the inordinate amount of abstract language that accompanies many of their occupations. There is a nice passage in the book where Soloukhin learns how to store fried mushrooms from a writer's wife as they stand in the corner at an important reception where people are making speeches about Socialist Realism and the positive role of the hero. But generally speaking this book does not raise

political questions, and this makes it perhaps Soloukhin's best. He has never seemed wholly happy when alternating descriptions of nature with comment on the Kolkhoz system or on the state of rural handicrafts.

Dagestan, the mountainous republic to the west of the Caspian Sea which contains at least a dozen different linguistic groups, has in recent years become popular with the literary intelligentsia of Moscow and Leningrad. Like Georgia, it offers the picture of a more ceremonial, patriarchal, stylish way of life, but has not gone over to the tourist trade to the same extent as Georgia, and is virtually free of foreign travellers, since only one or two towns in the republic are open to them. Rashid Gamzatov writes in Avar, the most important language of Dagestan, and he writes in what one takes to be traditional fashion, quoting the wisdom of his father, or of Abuladib a poet of an older generation or simply of proverbs. Gamzatov is himself a poet who has been turned to prose.

One approaches the book with suspicion. The title, *My Dagestan*, is a little florid. How much of this picture of wise, silent mountain men, this imagery of horses and riders, is for the Russian market, one wonders? But one is quickly reassured. Gamzatov has guessed at all our suspicions beforehand. He knows about the poets in minor languages who yearn to be translated and tells a very funny story about one who ended up with a talented Russian wife writing translations of which the originals never appeared.

The book has some striking and moving descriptions of traditional peasant life, and only occasionally does the emotion seem a little overdone. This may be the translation, which Soloukhin presumably did with the help of a literary critic. Generally it seems to be a book written

without fear or favour. It may have helped in dealing with publishing houses that the author was a member of the Dagestan Supreme Soviet. Large sections of the book have, incidentally, been translated into English and appeared in the November, 1968, number of *Soviet Literature*.

Kornei Chukovsky's book, which might be rendered as *The High Art of Translation*, has a complicated bibliographical history. None of the material is wholly new. But any volume that makes these splendid essays available is welcome. In a country where literary translation has attracted the best writing talents and is of a standard and on a scale that is rather shaming to us, Chukovsky has earned a wide reputation as translator from English (Kipling, Oscar Wilde, Walt Whitman and others) as well as a more popular one with his children's books. He knew England before the First World War when he was correspondent in London for an Odessa paper and his remarks on translation in both directions between English and Russian are always informed by a tremendous experience, and illustrated with a wealth of example. There is a rollicking section on howlers, but he insists that it is a far worse crime to betray the style of the original.

Because they were written at different times there is inevitably some repetition in the essays, and perhaps because of the prevailing Soviet emphasis on "scientific" criteria in translation, several pages are given to expounding (but always readably) fairly well-known linguistic concepts such as fields of meaning. But the humour and range of mind of the man always come through. A man of great literary talent does not do a lifetime of translating from the early days with Gorky and Zamyatin to the present day without having things to say which few others ever could.

Teach yourself to read

A. P. PRIMAKOVSKI: *O kulturne chetyrya*. 158pp. Moscow: Kniga. 23 kops.

As tribes, bibliophiles never seem very didactic, nor librarians very evangelical. Reading is an experience which the outsider is invited to share, a matter for toleration and smiles. So it is a surprise today to meet dash and dogma on the tired shelf of bookmanship, the more so when they are not just present to answer the call of science. Admittedly, the subtitle of *O kulturne chetyrya* ("On the art of reading") reads: *Metody samostoyatelnoy organizatsii samostoyatelnoy organizatsii samostoyatelnoy truda* ("methods of working independently with books in the light of scientifically organized mental work"), but the more likely origin of the freshness and vigour of the book seems to lie in a rediscovery. For an air-mechanic in Krasnoyarsk could not believe that "in this epoch

of cosmic speeds you still have to countenance sitting alone with obscure books within four walls". The ensuing newspaper correspondence established that, even amid universities, institutes, seminars, &c., "self-education" remained necessary. And Primakovski here recounts the debate, himself significantly reminding readers, in a chapter on "The Experience of Contemporaries with Books", that something must be supplied by the person as well as the state before knowledge gets into the memory. Which means you still have to work like Gorky, even though you are no longer underprivileged, a rediscovery or reminder out of which this spirited guide now issues. Spirited too, and surely novel, is the presentation of a lineage of reading habits. Reading aloud with friends? That Einstein did. Shortage of time to read? That was Faraday's lament too. Worth making notes? Francis Bacon thought you should. And so on. To bring author-

Public opinions

KAREL VAN HLT REVE (Editor): *Letters and Telegrams to Pavel M. Litvinov, 1939-1945*. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel.

The great unknown in the study of Soviet affairs is the state of public opinion. Diplomats and foreign correspondents live in their closely guarded ghettos while the foreign tourists are shepherded along a few well-worn paths, largely blinkered from any effective contact with the Soviet population. The pulse of popular attitudes in the Soviet Union is taken mainly from an analysis of the controlled press and other mass media, the dubious picture painted by official contacts, or the inevitably biased accounts painted by defectors. This paucity of information about the views and reactions of the Soviet man-in-the-street make the small volume of letters to Pavel Litvinov an object of some considerable interest. These letters received by the former foreign minister's grandson after the publication in the West and re-broadcast to the Soviet Union of his celebrated protest against the trial of young intellectuals provides a cross-section of opinions on his stand by people in all walks of life and many corners of the vast country.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the sixty-three letters is the insight they provide into the mentality of those Soviet intellectuals, and people interested enough to listen to the foreign radio, who opposed the young physicist's stand. There is anti-semitism in this group—letters abusing him as "yiddish spawn" and declaring that "in Israel they will welcome you". Another wrote: "your patriotism reeks of Israel". There are letters revealing a sadly misdirected hate for the values of the new "privileged" like that from the mother of a crippled child who wrote that she would not

shander the Soviet regime. Litvinov had even if her child cured in recompense. This saw Litvinov as one to whom Soviet power has given things, to whom from infancy he was open—you who have always been able to go wherever you wanted could choose whatever university wanted, who have always enjoyed rural security and were given a flat in Moscow municipality without waiting your turn.

It was, in her view, people like, sated and spoilt, "who have tolerated the teddy boys and other stuff" and who "drink" Marys" and "think up dirty pass as a personality of god". Another writer saw Litvinov's betrayal of his country as an act of frustrated anger because he denied "the hereditary principle". The traumatic effect of the stands out clearly in several whose authors see the transgression of Litvinov's appeal by the Voice of America as proof he was an accomplice of "whom we did not finish off in war". The many letters of support for Litvinov show that the day of Stalinism and its sequel has truncated the intelligentsia's line of unwavering faith in the

freedom. Particularly meaningful in this respect is a letter from a twenty-four Moscow school children. Pressing for the liberation of a whole platoon of authors, including Bak and Zamyatin, they wrote their grandfathers were shot, as camps, knew all the horrors of reaction. We realize how fearful to live surrounded by silence and for this reason the thinking people of the West call on all able men to rally round your spirits and sign your letter.

One of the letters has a Dostoevskian ring about it, asking food for thought: an old wrote from Tashkent that in the tyranny endured by his people was self-imposed, a self-mortification to punish his freedom in the early years of revolution which was little more than a hundred writers appear in the index, apart from obligatory chapters on "How Marx, Engels and Lenin worked with books".

Such an amiable work, although according to its own library-classification "intended for the young reader" and certainly suitable for modern-language sixth-formers, will all the same wryly gladden the hearts of old literary sinners. Amid chapters on bibliographies, reference volumes, theses and summary writing, there comes one which dares tell us never to pick up a book with dirty hands, never to rest writing materials on it, and never, when interrupted reading out-of-doors, to leave it open under the sun or in the damp.

Some books indeed are to be chewed and digested.

FICTION

Now watch this...

HENRY MILLER: *Sexus*. Book One of *The Roy Crucifixion*. 506pp. Calder and Boyars. £3 3s.

With the publication of *Sexus*, Henry Miller's autobiographical trilogy *The Roy Crucifixion* is now available in this country in its entirety. In autobiographical terms it is the first volume of the trilogy, and its publication is witness to the changed climate here in relation to the detailed description of sexual acts in literature. It is witness to nothing else, Henry Miller said everything of importance about himself and his attitude to life in the books published before the war, and this later trilogy repeats much less effectively what he said in the two "Tropics" volumes. If the message did not come through loud and clear before, it must surely do so here. "We are not living the life to the full," he says, "We are not doing anything of what we have failed to do and do whatever lies within our power." The Victorian simplicity of such statements should not mislead a reader into thinking that they refer to any attempt to help other people or to improve the general condition of mankind. What lay within Mr. Miller's power was sexual action, and in relation to this he has hardly ever failed. Perhaps it is not surprising that, as he told us in *Plutus*, he "mapped out the whole autobiographical romance" of the three volumes, "in one sitting", for the map never goes outside the contours of Henry Miller. His object is self-revelation, but curiously enough as more and more details of his past life, real or invented, are supplied, the effect is that we know less rather than more about him. What were his feelings about leaving his wife and small daughter, as he does in this volume? Apparently he had none, or if he had they were not thought worth recording. Friends are mentioned, and so is an office job, but they have little relation to anything except sexual satisfaction, as means of providing girls or borrowing money.

Locked horns

MAURICE EDELMAN: *All on a Summer's Night*. 244pp. Hamish Hamilton. 25s.

Mr. Edelman, whose new novel takes us into the deep-carpentered jungle territory where politics and big business meet, has distinctive qualities beyond the story-telling gift for which he is usually acclaimed. It is that he is a man who has been marked by the stripping of his up-to-the-minute props, and in *All on a Summer's Night* the Monopoles, Commission larks in the background and the business supplements are busy as busy—his stories would have no more grit of actuality, no more sense of the flow of real life, than Marie Corelli's.

It is the props that mainly matter. That stop-press up-to-dateness is vital, as nothing else is. In that context even Mr. Edelman's characters are more than the coloured puppets they would otherwise seem. They vividly exist as type-figures or symbols. What he gives us is a kind of modern morality. He takes his situations seriously and deploys them with vigour and skill. He has some urgent to report from this dangerous and still undefined frontier, the takeover belt where traditional enterprises are threatened with invasion by the new tycoons. He has shrewd political observations to make about men like the no-nonsense Minister of Political Reconstruction, "the clever boy of the primary school, quick with his fists and his jibes, the one who pretended never to do his homework but always did, the ringleader who became a political boss". Where the giants meet, when the horns lock, Mr. Edelman is well worth attending to. He knows more about the anatomy of the crunch than most writers.

Even in sexual terms this is a much less interesting and far more self-indulgent book than *Tropics of Cancer*. There are several passages here, like the fifteen pages describing a threesome with his first wife and a girl friend, which Miller would never have permitted himself to write in the "Tropics" days, not because he was then more timid but because their interest is solely that of the hard core sex book. Did these genital encounters actually take place? The question is unimportant. The point is that they are set down with the humourless intensity and the total disregard for anything except sexual activity that is characteristic of the best, respected Olympia Press publications. The "Tropics" books were marked by frantic energy and wild humour, they showed a caricatured interest in other people, and they gave an impression that their writer existed in a real world of suffering, hunger, passion. The best that can be said about *Sexus* is that throughout the book, sometimes in conditions of great difficulty, Mr. Miller always keeps his pecker up.

Intense, Melvillean pressures fire Flannery O'Connor's work—though her paradoxes make straight, rather than subvert, a path to the Kingdom of Heaven. "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent bear it away." It is the wilful merging of two disparate traditions—that of the symbolic, transcendental modes of New England as well as that of orthodox Catholicism—that accounts for her work's peculiar aesthetic jolt. But it is by her stories that she should finally be judged. Her novels brood too insistently on bondage and baptism, too relentlessly spin and spin their thematic and symbolic variations revealing the claustrophobic heart warped by the blazing immensity of God. "In the darkest, most private part of his soul, hanging upside-down like a sleeping bat, was the certain, undeniable knowledge that he was not hungry for the bread of life." In *The Violent Bear It Away* all are batty, all bats: the old prophet with the fish-coloured eyes, out of the asylum; his teacher nephew with earplugs (an atheist wired for sound); his starting, dim-wit son (the innocent "Bishop"); and the old prophet's grand-nephew Tarwater (*Tarwater*) who kills and baptizes the dim-wit in a single violent act. "Water," "fish," "fishing" are the symbolic threads that pattern the tale. As with Melville, the pattern of symbols, in

some sense, is the tale. For the characters are caught in the magnetic pull of mutual fascination. All are solipsists repelling their killer urge, or terrifying rushes of paternal love. This urge to master the world by rational thought or prophetic baptism is itself mad as hell. When mastered, it is always passion (blood-lust) that overwhelms, not the passion (of patient suffering).

For theology—"the death of the Lord Jesus Christ"—can warp. All moral tension (of teacher and prophet alike) is strung on the tangled paradoxes of Christianity. If an idiot son is the measure of moral response, insistence on moral integrity (of teacher or prophet) becomes merely the measure of fanatic illusion. In the last resort, all four characters are certifiable, if not certified. The novel ends in universal conflagration.

Yet Flannery O'Connor remains a novelist, not a theologian. The kind of criticism that classifies her as a "religious novelist" tends to miss the interplay of humour and character, the Southern cast of backwoods and city life, that fill her pages. Such criticism is like the plane-ride at a fall: "The houses weren't nothing but matchboxes and the people were invisible like germs." For Flannery O'Connor's artistry is all of close-ups. From the opening paragraph every detail is seen and stored.

Francis Marion Tarwater's uncle had been dead for only half a day when the boy got too drunk to finish digging his grave and a Negro named Buford Munson, who had come to get a job, had to finish it and drag the body from the breakfast table where it was still smug and busy in a decent and Christian way, with the son of its Saviour at the head of the grave and enough dirt on top to keep the dogs from digging it up. Buford had come along about noon, and when he left at sundown, the boy, Tarwater, had never returned from the dirt.

From that promise—that promise—the story undeviatingly unfolds

Close-ups

FLANNERY O'CONNOR: *The Violent Bear It Away*. 243pp. Faber and Faber. 30s.

The reissue of *The Violent Bear It Away* (1960) completes the publication of Flannery O'Connor's whole slim oeuvre (two novels, two collections of short stories) under a single British imprint. All thanks, then, to Faber and Faber for this formal resurrection. Her unique voice, so tragically cut short at the age of thirty-nine, needs to be heard throughout this short quarter.

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Shazam!

COLIN WILSON: *The Philosopher's Stone*. 315pp. Arthur Barker. 30s.

Nodding to Lovecraft and Wells and genuflecting before G. B. Shaw, Colin Wilson introduces his novel by telling us that he writes "... as a mathematician uses a sheet of paper for doing calculations". His theme—man's limited use of supposedly tremendous intellectual potential—has not changed, nor has his hero—except in name. This time it is Howard Newman (we take the hint from the surname) who, as a child of unnerving precocity, was taken away from his mundane family and educated by a rich scientist. Several years and sundry piercing insights later, he and a colleague hit on a method of juggling with their frontal lobes which produces an enormous degree of mind expansion and enables them to employ a

form of mental time travel by an effort of will. They discover that mankind is really the creation of some disembodied, all-powerful cosmic overlords called the Old Ones, who sleep beneath the earth. Humanity's salvation, it seems, lies in men becoming godlike in order to meet the Old Ones on their own terms when they finally wake up.

Plumbing intuitive depths on every page (italics drive the points home) Newman comes up with some pretty startling results. He discovers, among other things, that Bacon wrote Shakespeare (a "second-rate mind"), that life is sustained by will and that excretion is as mysterious as poetic inspiration. This last observation, at least, might help to convince some lesser mortals that their time is not entirely wasted, despite Newman's rather convenient insistence that his perceptions are too complex to be understood by anyone as dim as the average reader.

It seems a pity that those parts of the book which really deserve our attention—the accounts of Wales during the Depression, the harrowing descriptions of the tip disaster and its aftermath—are so divorced from the rest by both the standard of the writing and their obvious documentary interest, that we are forced to admit them in isolation.

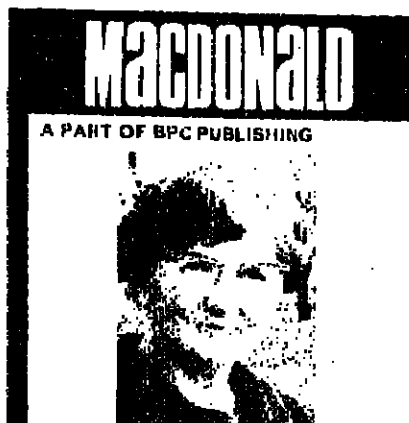
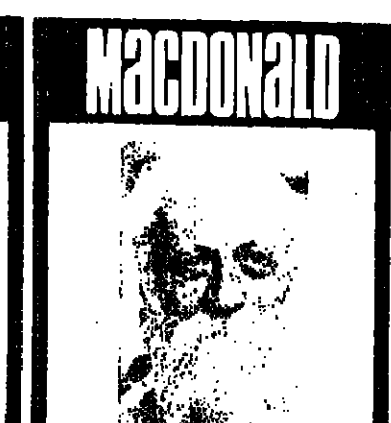

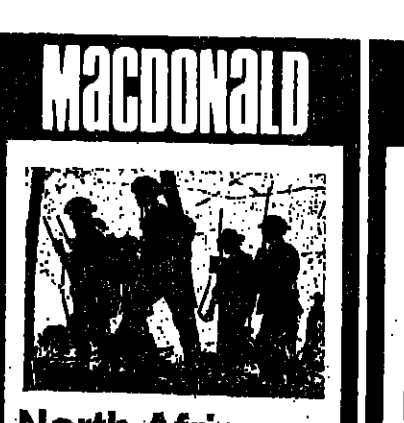

Coal country

ROBERT LAIT: *The Pit*. 223pp. MacGibbon and Kee. 30s.
 JOHN SUMMERS: *Edge of Violence*. 334pp. Leslie Frewin. 35s.

The Pit is about mining and miners—more particularly, about four men who, saddled with demanding personal problems, have at least two things in common: the necessity of earning a living by working almost defunct mine and a constant fear of something going wrong. In choosing his four men, Robert Lait has been a little too anxious to give us a balanced quartet. Peter: an old hand, dour, survivor of several pit accidents; Stanislaus: strong, silent, bitter; Jim: an Irishman, garrulous and weak; Joe: young, hopeful of a better life, the son of a man who died in the pit. The pattern, then, is set. It is fairly obvious from the outset that there will be an accident, and the roles of these four are easily guessed

at. The cave-in occurs, and the men are trapped. With their hope of rescue diminishing along with their oxygen, they quarrel, panic, and between times review their largely unhappy lives.

However, predictable as its plot, the book does have rewarding moments. Mr. Lait conveys well the stubbornness and ingrown sorrows of hard men—their single-mindedness and lack of compassion: this, especially, in the case of Peter, who treats his wife's inability to provide him with a son as if it were a crime. One of the major incidents in *Edge of Violence* is the collapse of a coal tip on to a Welsh school, a disaster in which more than 100 children lose their lives. The name that John Summers has given to the village where the tragedy occurs is Aberaf. The inevitable problem, of course, is that the reader is unlikely to be able to accept this as fiction at all. Joe Parry, a local boy who has

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COLLINS

Penny paper

The Poor Man's Guardian, 1831-1835. Four volumes. Introduction by Patricia Hollis. Merit Press, £37 16s. the set.

Believers in press freedom who justly complain of the irksome restrictions on it still enforced today must honour the memory of Henry Hetherington. He successfully defied the law in a reactionary age when the Establishment equated cheap newspapers with low political clubs, cheap gin, filthy hands, and unwashed faces. Through four adventurous years, Hetherington brought out his weekly, *The Poor Man's Guardian*, refusing to pay stamp duty and, in spite of all the efforts made to stop him, achieving a circulation of 16,000 and taking the lead for longevity and influence over all other working-class penny papers. *The Times* wrote of him that he was one of a band "who were familiar with the inside of every goal in the kingdom". This was pitching it high. But he did serve several sentences and lived a hunted life, disguising himself as a Quaker, a waggoner or a costermonger with the versatility of the Scarlet Pimpernel. To distribute his paper, dummy parcels were sent off in one direction by persons instructed to make all resistance they could to constables who seized them; meanwhile, real parcels were sent by another route. More than 500 men or women were prosecuted for selling the *Guardian*. The veteran agitator, George Holyoake, who was one of the 2,000 present at Hetherington's burial in Kensal Green, placed him second only to Richard Carlile in the class of stoutly insurgent publishers.

Now the journal that put him into

such trouble, won him fame in his lifetime and must have been enormously exciting to produce and circulate in available in four volumes. *The Poor Man's Guardian, 1831-1835*, with a well-documented introduction by Dr. Patricia Hollis. She does more than provide the indispensable prelude without which those weekly numbers, burning with the heat of old loyalties and hatreds, could not be read with understanding of what they meant to the ragged radicals who forked out under-the-counter pennies. It was a good pennyworth, Hetherington's main editor, James Brontë O'Brien, and other contributors hit hard. For them the Tories were innocents compared with the "bastard pseudo-liberal faction of the Whigs". Eminent clerics were "over-paid and unholy men". The Duke of Wellington, they rejoiced, had broken down in his base attempts against the liberties of the people. When they praised, they laid it on with a trowel. Their reviewer of *The People's Charter* declared that it ought to be read "by every lover of liberty in every country under the sun".

Dr. Hollis writes with sympathy as well as understanding of these rebels against authority, political and legal, who waged a dashing and, happily, in the end victorious guerrilla war. By middle-class standards, she argues, this was one of the most effective pressure groups of its stormy decade. The unstamped, led by the *Guardian*, made money, journalists and heroes. It was a crusade for the vote and cheap knowledge. The *Guardian* was not a pioneer of working-class papers. The *Black Dwarf*, *Gordon*, *Republican* and *Troopship* *Truth* had

fought preliminary skirmishes against excessive taxation and the placement, priests, warmongers and boroughmongers, whom the taxes went to support. The *Guardian* writers carried on this militant tradition and made unprecedented advances in its cause.

They were of the school of Thomas Barnes, their contemporary, editor of *The Times*, holding with him that journalism is in literature what brandy is in beverages: "John Bull, whose understanding is rather sluggish—I speak of the majority of readers—requires a strong stimulus." Hetherington's men gave it to the John Bullish proletariat hot and strong. They were out to get results. They campaigned for a new society, popularizing Chartism and helping to create the class-consciousness on which it drew. They set out to circulate their own brand of useful knowledge, to improve working-class public opinion, to displace orthodox interpretations of what was wrong with society, and to fight middle class political economy. They ranted. Hot air was their natural element. But so it was of many of the reactionaries in power. It was a violent age, in which so civilized a left-winger as Holyoake risked filling his pockets on railway journeys with home-made bombs, so that he might quietly try them out for efficiency in street fighting against tyrants.

Students, lucky enough to get a chance of reading these inevitably expensive volumes, will be grateful for the way in which they bring alive the fierceness of the dispute between haves and have-nots on the threshold of the Victorian age.

Periodical hey-day

JOHN O. HAYDEN: *The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-1824.* 330pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £2 16s.

The early nineteenth century was "the heyday of periodical reviewing", when the famous quarterlies and less famous monthlies discussed current works of literature at great length and with great seriousness, and in their turn became subjects of conversation, concern, and even of treatment in works of literature like *Biographia Literaria*, *Nightmare Abbey* and *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

The first section of Mr. Hayden's book briefly retells the history of the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review*, and brings together what is known about thirty or so lesser periodicals such as the *British Critic*, the *Christian Observer*, the *Eclectic Review*, the *Examiner*, *Blackwood's Magazine*, the *London Magazine*, and so on. (An appendix gives details of a further thirty reviewing periodicals, descending to *La Belle Assemblée* and the *Scottish Episcopo Magazine*, and even this list is by no means exhaustive.)

In his second section Mr. Hayden looks at reviews of "the Lake School" (Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey), "the Satanic School" (Scott, Byron, and Shelley), "the Cockney School" (Hunt, Keats, and Hazlitt), and three other writers: Moore, Lamb, and Crabbe. (Of this last group Mr. Hayden disarmingly says:

The three authors brought together in this chapter have little in common. If, as seems probable, this study originated as an academic dissertation, it is pleasant to think of Mr. Hayden teasing his examiners here.)

A final short section, "Attitudes, Policies and Practices", attempts a few generalizations and conclusions about reviewing in the period. All this is dispatched in well under 300 pages. The book brings together a lot of handy information about reviews and reviewing, and has a fairly full checklist of reviews of romantic literature, but it is clear that Mr. Hayden has no room to go very thoroughly into the subject. Instead of a detailed discussion of particular critical positions and judgments we find catalogues like this:

The weight of the Reviews, indeed, was against the poem (Wordsworth's *White Doe of Rylstone*), with both the *Quarterly Review* and *Edinburgh Review* joined by the *Monthly Review*, the *Champion*, the *Monthly Inquirer*, and the *New Monthly Magazine*, all in an adverse position, confronted only by the *British Review*, the *Anglian Review*, and the *Eclectic Review*, and the *Gentleman's*, the *European*, and the *British Lady's Magazine*.

It is not obvious that a procedure like that represented by the sentence above could be illuminating, even if reviews could be classed as "for" or "against" in this clumsy way. In fact, reviews in this period were so prolix, and their critical comment was often so equally divided between praise and censure that it is hard to

determine a reviewer's ultimate

Mr. Hayden does not deal with these grotesque pieces of course, but when he does specify he often has to come to material so severely that the reviewer's remarks are, for example, he quotes from a letter of Wordsworth's *Poems* (1815) to admit the advisability of terminal complaint about "common ideas" and "puerile" conceits, without telling the reader that the remarks point not to the "common ideas" but to the "puerile" conceits. "Resolution and Independence" to lines like these:

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strong
The cattle are grazing
Their heads never raising
There are forty feeding like

Mr. Hayden has a genuine point during the whole of their working hours and there have come into being Byron's particular remarks on the obtuse is unjust.

Mr. Hayden allows himself to be misled by published reports as that of an American girl who had come to this country to leave her pregnant mother and, according to the unfashionable pronouncement of Byron's particular remarks on the obtuse is unjust.

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SOCIAL STUDIES

Against abortion

RUSSELL L. SHAW: *Abortion on Trial.* 176pp. Robert Hale, 30s.

There can be few questions on which Russell L. Shaw's book is so confused by instinct as that of legal abortion. It is possible to admit the advisability of terminal abortion in certain pregnancies and to have no religious objections to the procedure, indeed, to have no religion, without telling the reader that the remarks point not to the "common ideas" but to the "puerile" conceits. "Resolution and Independence" to lines like these:

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The small birds twitter,
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Genetic education

F. R. JEVONS: *The Teaching of Science.* 208pp. Allen and Unwin, £2. (Paperback, 25s.)

At a time when books on education tend to provide questions of infinitesimal scope with even more minute answers, it is refreshing to find a writer capable of taking as the title of his first chapter, "Why Teach Science?" Of course, before long he is asking, "Why teach anything at all?" and as a biologist he sets down for proper qualification—the idea that the process of learning from some general stock of acquired knowledge amounts to a new form of heredity. And since the "genes" of scientific knowledge have particularly strong evolutionary effects, scientific education now being one of the principal agents of social change, its importance is self-evident. This might seem to be an instance where the obvious has been presented in unfamiliar terms merely for effect, but it does bring home the danger of allowing the individual to be trampled into subservience in the great "evolutionary" stampede of history. One of the greatest merits of Professor Jevons' book is, in fact, that in numerous little ways he shows himself sensitive to the needs of the individual. It is a consequence of this concern of his that he argues for the value of a scientific education for people who have no intention of occupying themselves with specialized scientific work. The cost-effective new view takes a drubbing by implication, rather than by any close analysis of its essential inhumanity.

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founded at Manchester University in 1906. The undergraduate course which it runs was apparently intended to help young men and women to bring a scientific background to the study of literature. This new book is naturally in some respects a declaration of faith in the course—and in parts even an advertisement for it. It has a useful set of bibliographical notes and comments, providing it with a topicality which will, of course, fade away, offset to some extent by a rather naive chapter on the nature of the scientific process. The book is permeated by a half-taught and insufficiently qualified belief in the cumulative character of science. This belief has commended itself to the "science of science" people—with whom the author would probably not wish to be bracketed—merely because it simplifies the task of drawing graphs of scientific advance.

Yet this is not the stuff of which the best parts of *The Teaching of Science* are made. These are two chapters dealing with specialization in scientific education, and reform. To a number of specific problems, each of great importance. What price the lure of research? Why the swing away from science? and so on. Professor Jevons brings out the brilliant though ineffectual ivory tower wit of some writers, but the common-sense views of one who has thought deeply and in practical terms on these matters. He makes no startling suggestions, and indeed it is a true, hard to extract an opinion from what he writes, but in setting out his material in a palatable form he has provided a focal point for the subject which educators will value and which politicians may read to advantage.

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Writer's guide

A Manual of Style. Twelfth Edition. 546pp. University of Chicago Press. £4 10s.

Printers and publishers of books and newspapers have their own house styles. Some derive these from all published enclaves such as *Hart's Rules for Compositors and Readers at the University Press, Oxford*; others compile their own even slimmer booklets for private use. The style manual of the University of Chicago Press stands alone, and has done so for many years. The rewritten twelfth edition (with 546 pages, as against 200 in the first edition of 1906) tells authors, editors and copy-writers all they could need to know about how a manuscript should be prepared for printing and how the more technical aspects of printing apart, a book is made. Spelling, punctuation, footnotes, references, citation of public documents, romanization of oriental languages, mathematical and scientific symbols, indexing, proof correction, blue-inking—these are only a few of the subjects expertly treated.

The arrangement of the book and their presentation to the reader are as how should not be when the editors and signers are following rules have taken them several years to bring to perfection? In the they have mastered an excellent and unpretentious practical manual in reference to the volume. "Consider" versus 88, for example. Some wise literate people cannot up to C the Roman way to detect misprints, has only one branch of this for Let the reader find this for Not all the rules, such as the date "6/30/69" on the jacket, are acceptable in Britain, though they were driving Americans, and more particularly Chicago's own authors and the greater number of them are universal for easily adapted British academic or technical writing, these are only a few of the subjects expertly treated.

In defence of privilege

JOHN WAKEFORD: *The Cloistered Elite.* 269pp. Macmillan, £2 5s. T. E. B. Howarth: *Culture, Anarchy and the Public Schools.* 96pp. Cassell, 21s.

The world of Tom Brown and John Verney, of elaborate schoolboy taboos and hierarchies, of "working the system" the soft pornography inside the cover of *Everyday Life of Ancient Rome*, the public bar because the masters invariably travel saloon —of compulsory chapel and house-majors' knees, in short of the English public school, has until recent years been the preserve of the young novelist anxious to exorcise the ghosts of his adolescence or of the ageing autobiographer afflicted with a peculiarly English form of nostalgic delusion.

It is a relief therefore to find that one is not tempted to laugh at John Wakeford's analysis of the English public boarding school. *The Cloistered Elite* is neither naive nor partisan. It is admirably objective where other sociological studies have failed to reconcile the demands of objectivity with the attractions of sensationalism; and anyone familiar with the different strata of life in a public school will acknowledge both the accuracy of Mr. Wakeford's data and the shrewdness of many of his insights. The comments of the pupils in the research school and the recorded interviews with sixth formers also suggest that, unlike some eager young sociologists, he has not been taken for a ride by the more imaginative senior boys.

The English public boarding school (there are few in Scotland, and none of note in Wales) is a complex structure of horizontal and vertical relationships. It is one of the fascinating of these institutions that—since Lindsay Anderson—the structure has been proof against internal rebellion for 150 years. Since the end of the eighteenth century when Dr. Keate crushed revolts by bugling every boy at Eton and the young Lord Byron led a violent rebellion at Harrow, public school boys have acquiesced in a restriction of personal freedom that would never have been tolerated by their peers. Even now, with the National Union of Students beating the drum and pupil power becoming a reality in the large day-schools of London and Manchester, the senior boys of the boarding public schools remain largely unshaken.

Those who find this puzzling should read Mr. Wakeford and in particular his chapter on "Adaptation to the School", a chapter that should also be required reading for new housemasters who will bear the brunt of the conflict between the school establishment and the individual "holsh" and "rebel". As Mr. Wakeford points out, it is the housemasters who see themselves as the bulwark against anarchy and who "often constitute a conservative core within the school with which the headmaster has to contend". It is a commonplace today for the headmaster to find himself caught between, on the one hand, housemasters and old boys of the school who interpose every relaxation of discipline as a deterioration in standards, and on the other, sixth formers who, though far from militant, make modest demands for greater freedom. Indeed the relationship between the headmaster and the housemasters is sometimes analogous to that of reforming monarch to overmighty subjects whose authority and status appear to be threatened.

Mr. Wakeford is perhaps a little unkind to housemasters. No doubt it is true that with some, the slightest deviation from the norm on the part of a boy in their house can lead to a loss of a sense of proportion. As one sixth former recalled: "I didn't turn up to one of the House matches to cheer, and the House-master just had me in and screamed at me for a couple of minutes." But there are exceptional housemasters who are not only capable of accepting reform but also of establishing a relationship with the boys in their house that gives meaning to the overworked concept of *in loco parentis*. If Mr. Wakeford underestimates the value of the work done by these men, he gives an excellent description of the role of those masters who are on the fringe of the authoritarian structure—the heart and music teachers, for example—whose importance is often underestimated by the school. A music teacher may perform a pastoral function among the less adaptable boys by inviting them into his house and being prepared to talk less guardedly than other members of the staff. Though this role may be regarded as "subversive" by the housemasters, it can in some cases make the difference between survival and expulsion, and is probably more important than the role for which the master is paid.

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Collisions of a peculiar Puritan

Mr. Tolson

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Out of line

RICHARD HARGREAVES: *The Bloodybush*, 368pp. Rupert Hart-Davis, £2.15s.

In an essay entitled "culture in Knopcks", the late Dixon Ryan Hoopes provided an instructive account of the benefits incidentally conferred on North America by the presence of rival armies during the revolutionary war: the British excelled in theatrical performances, while the French were distinguished for their dentists. Major Hargreaves's book, with its subtitle *The British Servicemen in North America and the Caribbean 1654-1783*, seemed to promise a more extensive and general survey of this kind, depicting military life in the New World rather than death in battle.

For much of the period the hazards and responsibilities of war were less adjuncts of service duties and interests, which dwell rather on matters as diverse as surveying, administering justice, maintaining lines of communication, pursuing smugglers investing in land and marrying colonial heiresses: a description of these activities, even if written without recourse to original sources, could have proved entertaining and useful. Unfortunately, *The Bloodybush*, judged by any standard, is almost wholly lacking in merit.

An argument is not necessarily invalidated by the expression of questionable opinions on matters of peripheral importance. Major Hargreaves appears to disapprove of the Puritans, the French, and resistance to authority: he can be charged with historical errors in his expression of these views, just as he will find few supporters for his notion that the deposition of James II constituted "one of the bluest 'take-over bids' in history", without endangering his claim to an understanding of military matters.

Outside that field, Major Hargreaves may frequently be considered to be wrong, or wrong-headed. His assertions, allegedly on the authority of Sir Charles Petrie, the references are limited to author and title: that on the eve of the revolution "the East India Company controlled something like 200 votes

in the House of Commons" and that "the Quakers in Pennsylvania were located to a man", will settle most historians; while the Duke of Newcastle, who receives an extremely adverse report, did at least discover that Cape Breton was an island, a condition which Major Hargreaves has not appreciated was not the case with the Dutch colonies of Demarara and Essequibo. A main theme may be hemmed, but not impeded, by errors of this kind: though there are all too many to be found here.

It is claimed, however, that the author "draws on all the main sources" relating to military matters. This is very far from being the case. Both primary and secondary sources have been ignored. Sporadic references are made to manuscript materials, though the bibliography—a model of disorder—provides no assurance that these have been in any way systematically examined, while it is astonishing to find that the works of I. R. Allen, A. L. Burt, C. P. Carter, and I. H. Gipson, to list only a few leading authorities, have not been consulted: only one, minor, publication of the late Eric Robson is noted, and that under the name of Robinson.

Where Major Hargreaves has succeeded in extending his reading beyond his preferred nineteenth-century authors, there are no signs of an ability to digest and incorporate the findings of recent works of scholarship. The admirable and essential investigations of W. H. Wilson, Piers Mackesy, and John Sley are acknowledged, but not perceptibly put to use. Pride of place is given to a tedious and flimsy description of battles and campaigns which competent historians have discussed more perceptively and narrated more fluently.

This erroneous chronicle is described as "an informal military history". Many writers have demonstrated that the history of war can be most effectively written without benefit of academic training or discipline. When, however, informality reduces description to caricature, the virtues of the "pragmatic ground" become apparent. This simply does not pass inspection, in or out of uniform.

Cornish exports

A. L. ROWSE: *Tudor Cornwall*. New edition. 462pp. The Cornish in America. 451pp. Macmillan, £3.10s. each.

These two books are linked not only by their common author and their common relationship to the Cornish people, but also because Dr. Rowse has chosen to present his new book as a sequel to his earlier masterpiece as a sequel to his earlier masterpiece. Yet at best it is more a programme for research to be done by others, rather than a volume comparable to the highly finished piece of work that Dr. Rowse published in 1941.

This is unfortunate, for although *The Cornish in America* cannot detract from the merits of *Tudor Cornwall*, the comparison makes it harder not to be excessively severe on a pleasant and amateur work of provincial piety which, coming from a less distinguished scholar, might well have earned a few kind words. Of course, the point to which Dr. Rowse's latest book belongs is not rich in scholarly work. Most of the American filio-distic literature is at a pre-Blandford stage of hagiography. Some of it is barely literate. Most of it is quite uncritical and one-sided, uncritical book shows up the faults of another. Thus the same people appear as Germans or "Scotch-Irish" in different books and some identifications by family names are preposterous (thus Pettigru and Lamont have often appeared as Huguenot names and a recent claim has been made for the

late Harry Daugherty as "Scotch-Irish"). Naturally, Dr. Rowse is too good an historian to indulge in nonsense of this kind. He knows more than anybody else about Cornish history and so escapes the traps laid for patriotic Irish and German historians who know far too little of the history of the ancestral land. So far so good. But the pursuit of the Cornish in America presents problems that Dr. Rowse has not solved or has passed to others (for example to the editors of a new edition of *The Dictionary of American Biography*). Basically, he hunts the Cornishmen by family names and apparently assesses their present location and numbers by reading local telephone books. But he knows that many Cornishmen have "English" names so that where there are, let us say, Nancarrowes, he assumes that many Cornishmen are nearby, disguised under English names like Harris, so "will" and "would" appear too often.

Then it is right to pursue Cornishmen by seeking the centres of Cornish emigration—and that means examining records of uneven value in areas where the special Cornish art of mining called for their skills. But compared with the Scots, Welsh, Irish, the Cornish were small in numbers, had lost their native tongue by the eighteenth century and celebrated St. George, not their own saints (there seems to be no equivalent of St. Andrew, St. Patrick or St. David or the cults that have grown up around them). Most of the Cornish emigrants were Methodists, but they seem to have had no equivalents for the various Welsh varieties of

Unitarianism. Dr. Rowse himself has described this phase as "a gradual emergence of the United States into light"; though the poetry is introducing a Cornish blood to deal with chaotic and irrational highest political circles. The pre-eminence of experience, its sheer verbal beauty, the good Cornish model of coherence from which a kind of ordering eventually springs. What is impressive is the apparently unforced nature of this ordering: unlike his contemporary, Jorge Guillén, Alexandre does not believe in the poem as a more intense kind of reality, but as a means of heightening one's sense of a universal relationship which exists, fully formed at the deepest level of experience. This sense is rooted in the basic intuition expressed in the title of his fourth collection, *La destrucción o el amor* (1932-33): love, as the determining principle of cosmic unity, implies destruction, since the total fusion which creation ideally demands is prevented by the limitations of finite substance. In these poems, the forces of the natural world are conveyed through dazzling images of birds, beasts and reptiles which embody the universal process in a state of innocent violence. Human love is centred on the self-

most form of Methodism, the United States, or the various forms of Scottish Calvinism: there was no equivalent of the exportations as the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Yet within the limits of his subject and by his method, Rowse tells us a great deal about the American homes of his 1920s, and perhaps the only one who people. Readers who dislike still writing at his best. His collection of terms like "Celtic" and "Celtic" is nothing less than an explanation, for example, of the Cornish rivalry, or a sense of special cultural identity. Dr. Rowse does not but explain (can anyone?) the failure of the Cornish men to bring the past to life as with the scope of his work, as well as indifferently, like that of a keeper, William O'Brien at the a noticeably "modern" poet, who in San Francisco, Nor was aware of Freudian psychology and Cornish Andrew Carnegie.

It is all the older, then, that Rowse gives only a few lines to the second and third collections, *Pasión de la tierra* (1928-29) and *Exposición* (1930-31), which mark her was the most famous family name almost total break with the relative Quays and Clark of the generally believed the idea. Alexandre himself has described Warren Gamaliel Harding as "a gradual emergence of the United States into light"; though the poetry is introducing a Cornish blood to deal with chaotic and irrational highest political circles. The pre-eminence of experience, its sheer verbal beauty, the good Cornish model of coherence from which a kind of ordering eventually springs. What is impressive is the apparently unforced nature of this ordering: unlike his contemporary, Jorge Guillén, Alexandre does not believe in the poem as a more intense kind of reality, but as a means of heightening one's sense of a universal relationship which exists, fully formed at the deepest level of experience. This sense is rooted in the basic intuition expressed in the title of his fourth collection, *La destrucción o el amor* (1932-33): love, as the determining principle of cosmic unity, implies destruction, since the total fusion which creation ideally demands is prevented by the limitations of finite substance. In these poems, the forces of the natural world are conveyed through dazzling images of birds, beasts and reptiles which embody the universal process in a state of innocent violence. Human love is centred on the self-

VICENTE ALEXANDRE: *Obras completas*. 1,694pp. Madrid: Aguilar, 400pms.

At seventy, Vicente Alexandre is one of the last surviving members of the brilliant generation of Spanish poets which began to publish in the early 1920s, and perhaps the only one who people. Readers who dislike still writing at his best. His collection of terms like "Celtic" and "Celtic" is nothing less than an explanation, for example, of the Cornish rivalry, or a sense of special cultural identity. Dr. Rowse does not but explain (can anyone?) the failure of the Cornish men to bring the past to life as with the scope of his work, as well as indifferently, like that of a keeper, William O'Brien at the a noticeably "modern" poet, who in San Francisco, Nor was aware of Freudian psychology and Cornish Andrew Carnegie.

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This Dr. Brown has sought to do. He is unimpressed with either the political or social condition of England in the time of Edward the Confessor, and he thinks these were vastly improved during the decades which followed the death of Harold. He is even lukewarm in his appreciation of the excellencies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

These are deep questions which admit to short of any answer perhaps, he true that Anglo-Saxons which was once understood is now in some quarters and it is certainly to be regretted that the pugnacious and artistic nationalism which was characteristic of Freeman's recently been introduced into studies. What remains remarkable, however, is that these events remote eleventh century can generate the most surprising of the most unlikely poems. Events, Dr. Brown argues with erudition and courage, conclusion is both stimulating and enlightening. At the head of his chapter, and again as the conclusion of his book, he poses the "unanswerable question": England itself, in English quarters, still hovers and exults, exultantly over its William Conquest, rigorous line of Normans and Angevins; but without them, if we consider well, what had it ever been? It is a vigorous challenge, and less it will not remain unanswered.

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The undivided cosmos

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At seventy, Vicente Alexandre is one of the last surviving members of the brilliant generation of Spanish poets which began to publish in the early 1920s, and perhaps the only one who people. Readers who dislike still writing at his best. His collection of terms like "Celtic" and "Celtic" is nothing less than an explanation, for example, of the Cornish rivalry, or a sense of special cultural identity. Dr. Rowse does not but explain (can anyone?) the failure of the Cornish men to bring the past to life as with the scope of his work, as well as indifferently, like that of a keeper, William O'Brien at the a noticeably "modern" poet, who in San Francisco, Nor was aware of Freudian psychology and Cornish Andrew Carnegie.

It is all the older, then, that Rowse gives only a few lines to the second and third collections, *Pasión de la tierra* (1928-29) and *Exposición* (1930-31), which mark her was the most famous family name almost total break with the relative Quays and Clark of the generally believed the idea. Alexandre himself has described Warren Gamaliel Harding as "a gradual emergence of the United States into light"; though the poetry is introducing a Cornish blood to deal with chaotic and irrational highest political circles. The pre-eminence of experience, its sheer verbal beauty, the good Cornish model of coherence from which a kind of ordering eventually springs. What is impressive is the apparently unforced nature of this ordering: unlike his contemporary, Jorge Guillén, Alexandre does not believe in the poem as a more intense kind of reality, but as a means of heightening one's sense of a universal relationship which exists, fully formed at the deepest level of experience. This sense is rooted in the basic intuition expressed in the title of his fourth collection, *La destrucción o el amor* (1932-33): love, as the determining principle of cosmic unity, implies destruction, since the total fusion which creation ideally demands is prevented by the limitations of finite substance. In these poems, the forces of the natural world are conveyed through dazzling images of birds, beasts and reptiles which embody the universal process in a state of innocent violence. Human love is centred on the self-

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This Dr. Brown has sought to do. He is unimpressed with either the political or social condition of England in the time of Edward the Confessor, and he thinks these were vastly improved during the decades which followed the death of Harold. He is even lukewarm in his appreciation of the excellencies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

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destructive aggression of the sexual act, in itself a symbolic representation of the death which is the only means of becoming integrated in a higher form of existence.

This is the extreme form of the myth which, with certain modifications, determines the rest of Alexandre's work: though, as Carlos Bousoño makes clear in his preface, there is a point at which the emphasis shifts decisively from the physical universe to a consideration of man in his human context. This point comes in *Historia del corazón* (1945-53), though it is anticipated by certain poems in *Sombra del paraíso* (1939-43), in which Alexandre's sense of universal perfection begins to shape itself around images of a lost Eden, glimpsed platonically through memories of childhood and other forms of pastoral simplicity. Critics have tended to associate this new emphasis with the general shift towards a socially-committed type of verse which occurred in Spain in the late 1940s. In his theoretical statements of the time, Alexandre clearly sympathizes with such aims, yet the fact that his own poetry continues to be so superior to that of the so-called "poetas sociales" merely confirms its continuity with his earlier work.

The most surprising poems in *Historia del corazón* are not those on collective themes, in which the expression of human solidarity occasionally falls into sentimentality, but the group of love-poems which include "Mano entregada", "Otra no amo" and "El último amor". Here, for the first time, Alexandre strikes a note which continues to echo in some of the best of the younger Spanish poets, like Lluís Rodri-guez: a tenderness which is aware of its own illusions and which accepts the limitations of a human relationship as the proof of its uniqueness. The relationship of the lovers is now seen as a microcosm of the much vaster relationship in which the living and the dead appear as innumerable facets of a single material, the "materia única" of the concluding poem in Alexandre's last major collection, *En un vasto dominio* (1958-62).

Seen in perspective, this new sense of collective involvement may be seen to have its origins in the vision of an undivided cosmos which dominates the earlier poetry and whose presence can still be felt in the later work, notably in the wonderful group of poems on the parts of the

body which opens this last collection. The majority of these poems are simpler than the earlier ones, but only because they can afford to be: the inexhaustible spectacle of human lives is evoked in poem after poem with the same gift of compassionate observation which underlies the brilliant prose-sketches of fellow-writers contained in *Los encuentros* (1954-58) and other similar pieces. Almost any of these poems would be enough to make the reputation of a lesser poet, and a number, like the series of "Retratos anónimos", are very fine indeed. At the same time, compared with Alexandre's earlier work, there is a relaxing of pressure which here and there makes for a certain monotony. The verbal skill is as great as ever, and the sheer ability to construct a poem is continuously impressive: what one misses is the degree of commitment which made possible a poem like "Concomus sombra", from *Historia del corazón*, in which Alexandre seemed for once to be groping towards a genuinely religious experience which would transform his sense of the human situation into something more deeply personal.

This note does, in fact, reappear very movingly in his most recent collection, *Poemas de la comunión* (1968), which is not included in the *Obras completas*. These poems, for the most part of almost aphoristic brevity, are among the bleakest which Alexandre has written. Their treatment of old age and the passing of love is uncompromisingly honest and devoid of any kind of easy consolation. If the poet himself sees his whole work as a constant clarification of means and material to view which seems essentially just, these new poems at least break through to the kind of difficult simplicities which are occasionally the reward for a lifetime's major work. So, recalling the words of Hamlet "To die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream", he writes in "El poeta recuerda su vida": "The poet remembers his life".

Forgive me: I have slept. To sleep is not to live. Peace to all men. To live is not to sleep, nor to glimpse words which may still live us. To live in words? Words die, are beautiful to hear, but unmeaning like this clear night. Yesterday at dawn. Or when the completed day draws out its final beam, which falls upon your face. It sends your eyes with a single stroke of light. Sleep. The night is long, but already it is past.

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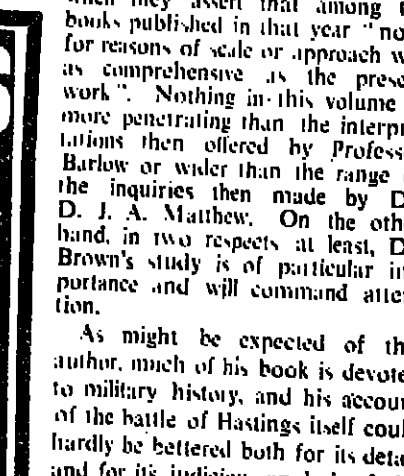
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As might be expected of this author, much of his book is devoted to military history, and his account of the battle of Hastings itself could hardly be bettered both for its detail and for its judicious analysis of the evidence. Moreover, as one who has already established himself as an authority on castles, Dr. Brown is especially concerned with the details of Anglo-Norman military organization, and this approach imparts a welcome actuality to his long discussion of the vexed question of the origins of feudalism in England. His treatment of this topic, though it is disproportionately long, is in fact the most valuable part of his book.

Dr. Brown, speaking with expert knowledge, and from a close acquaintance with the original sources, goes out of his way in this matter to repudiate "the modern obsession with him, 'feudalism in England owes its origins to the Normans'". The heavily armed knight trained to fight on horseback, and tenure by knight-service, both made their appearance in this country after 1066. In short, the feudal structure of medieval England was initially the work of William the Conqueror, and it was only during his reign that its most salient features began to appear.

Castles, the symbols and much of the substance of feudal lordship, were no less an importation into England than the knights, and like the knights were a principal means whereby the Norman Conquest was achieved.

Lyrics of survival

ANNA AKHMATOVA: *Selected Poems*. Translated and introduced by Richard McKane. Essay by Andrei Sinyavsky. 111pp. Oxford University Press. 22s.

The publication of a sizable selection of Anna Akhmatova's verse is to be welcomed, as was the honorary doctorate awarded her in Oxford in 1963. She was a woman of magnificent looks, unshakable dignity, great generosity, and undeniable although limited poetic talent. She began writing in her early twenties, before the First World War and continued, with enforced interruptions, until her death in 1966. She suffered almost intolerable adversity in both her private and her public life, but was finally rehabilitated, becoming president of the Union of Soviet Writers two years before her death. To acquaint oneself with her work in a good English translation is not only to receive aesthetic pleasure, but, above all, to be afforded another glimpse of the tragedy of Russian literature over the past fifty years.

Andrei Sinyavsky's critical article, which precedes the selection, is worth reproducing, if only to remind the English public of this courageous and still continuing effort. It is an opportunity to counter the vicious public attack on Akhmatova made by Ivanov in 1947. But he falls to convince us that her poetry changes from the barest whisper to fiery eloquence. From downward to upward, from despair to hope, from the

ranges from whispers to anguished screams, from personal happiness to the most acute personal distress. It is lyrical, modest, feminine, narrow in tone and form. The sensibility of many passages is admirable and has encouraged scores of young "unofficial" poets in Russia, brought up to despise sensibility, nevertheless to give expression to their own.

In her youth Akhmatova was capable of turning out sentimental trash such as "The Gray-Eyed King": the triteness of this ballad is difficult to appreciate unless one actually hears the turn-of-phrase, turn-of-idea of the original Russian; but the fact that it was set to even trite music by the émigré chansonnier Vertinsky, and sung at moments of boozing nostalgia in those countless Russian restaurants and cafés that abounded in at least three continents during the 1920s and 1930s, speaks for itself. At her worst, Anna Akhmatova was less good than any English-language poetess who is taken seriously anywhere today. The historical events which took her away from the parks and beaches of her early years and placed her in the queue of women waiting endlessly outside the gates of a Leningrad prison for news of husbands or sons also eliminated every trace of false sentiment from her writing. In *Requiem* (1935-1940), which describes this experience, she reached the peak of her powers. But the subject called for something at once simpler and more austere than Akhmatova's: the poetess seems to have been capable of that. It is why, in this reader's opinion, the most moving lines in the

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STUDIES ON VOLTAIRE AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. Vol. LXVII-LXIX are in the press. A list of volumes still in print is available (*the Studies are obtainable only from Geneva, as below*).

INSTITUT ET MUSÉE VOLTAIRE
Les Délices
Geneva

THE takes one up to one of the highest floors in the tower which dominates the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. In this office, Dr. Warren Roberts, Director of the Humanities Research Centre, has his small, book-crowded office.

A genial, quiet-spoken, modestly reserved character, rather hurly, rather taller than medium height, with a wartime record in the U.S. Navy, Dr. Roberts is ready to extend a friendly welcome to all visiting scholars and authors, however humble. He takes an immense pride in the astonishing collection of books, manuscripts and pictures under his care, and is eager to talk about them, to explain how they came to be there, and to defend the University's collecting policy against its critics: some, not unreasonably, jealous, some bitterly frustrated in the self-righteous, some voicing reasoned fears of a dangerous monopoly development.

To begin with, the history, as extraordinary as a gigantic win on the football pools. The State Constitution of Texas, rewritten in 1876, allotted "one million acres of the then available Public Domain" to the University which was then being founded. A few years later, in 1883, the railroads returned to the state approximately two million acres which had been made available to them, considering them too worthless to survey. Of these two million acres, the legislature handed over half to the University lands. Eighty-six years ago, therefore, the young University found itself in possession of a vast but doubtfully valuable estate of rather more than two million acres, chiefly grazing land. Indeed, it was considered to be so poor, that at one time the University found it difficult to get more than a few cents an acre for grazing rights.

The heads and their attendant cowboys continued to roam over this domain, undisturbed, for forty years. It was then that the fantastic, lucky chance occurred. Prospecting for oil had gone on for some time, but so fruitlessly that the area became known as the "Wildcaters' Graveyard". Suddenly, in 1923, the well known as Santa Rita Number 1 began to gush, or "blew in". It was not long before the prospectors realized that they had tapped an enormous oilfield, and the Regents of the University that they were going to be far, far richer than the founders had ever dreamed. Today, there are 5,600 oil wells and 130 gas wells, and more than forty million barrels of oil are produced annually on University lands. This alone, if it were an individual state, would rank tenth in the United States for oil production. What is more, oil and natural gas are not the only riches lying beneath the soil—sulphur and other minerals have recently been discovered, and prospecting goes on apace.

By various Acts of the legislature and decisions of the Supreme Court of Texas, a permanent university fund was established, into which all oil, gas and water royalties are to be paid in perpetuity, as well as all rentals on mineral leases, grazing leases and other increments. The arrangement by which this vast annual income is divided is complicated, but one can say, roughly, that the University of Texas "system" gets all the money from the grazing leases, and two-thirds of the money from the oil, gas, and other royalties. The remainder goes to the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas at Bryan.

Dr. Roberts and his colleagues are careful to point out that this arrangement, in its details, could be varied at any time by the state legislature, but they are not unduly worried. For one thing, the Humanities Research Centre has benefited, and continues to benefit, from a large number of gifts and legacies from private individuals. In this, as always, nothing succeeds like success.

The core of the Humanities Research Centre is the Academic Centre Library. It was the present Chancellor of the whole system, Harry Ransom, who conceived the idea of using part of the University's new riches to amass a great collection of twentieth-century manuscripts, first editions, and other documents connected with modern English and American literature, while the rest of the College collected the past. The University of Texas could not hope to attract some other great American

universities in material connected with specific centuries or subjects in the past—for example, the eighteenth century at Yale, the field in twentieth-century literature was still pretty well wide open, particularly as English institutions appeared to show so little interest.

The programme was set in motion scarcely a dozen years ago, but already an immense treasure has been brought to Austin for the benefit of research students from all over the world. Lesser riches might have induced greater selectivity; but given the almost bottomless bank account, it is difficult to fault the H.R.C. for taking the view that, outside the greatest names, today's favourites are not always tomorrow's, and vice versa, and that anyway the papers of even a quite minor figure may illuminate a major research project. The buying is not indiscriminate by any means, but the net has been thrown very wide. Criticism has perhaps been more justified on the ground that the pace of buying has not been matched by commensurate cataloguing resources; but that weakness, as I have seen for myself, is being speedily remedied by a dedicated staff.

Inevitably, the impact of a super-rich buyer has been dramatic in a market where modern manuscripts fetched only modest prices even twenty years ago. Some writers (who ought to have known better) have sneered that anyone can sell the contents of his wastepaper basket to Texas now. It is odd, to my mind, that a writer who benefits by such collecting zeal should be contemptuous rather than grateful. And the whole point is, surely, that if one accepts the basic proposition that collecting the manuscripts and corrected proofs of authors is a valuable activity, one has to recognize that much valuable material has in the past gone into wastepaper baskets, never to be recovered. Of course there are the wastepaper basket forgers, who keep the midnight oil burning while they make phone, drafts and corrected drafts of poems and stories long since published. Every time something becomes valuable, the forger pops up, as art dealers know all too well; it is part of the price one pays. Even so, even in the case of manuscripts, even when the forger is the author himself, expert collectors learn to have expert noses. What is more difficult for an institution such as the Academic Centre Library to avoid is the case where it buys an important manuscript in the belief, shared in good faith by the seller, that it is the genuine first draft, only to discover later that an earlier draft has come to light. It was a black day at the Humanities Research Centre when the Quinn manuscript of *The Waste Land* was unearthed.

No one can visit the Humanities Research Centre, I believe, without being deeply impressed by the care that is being taken to sift the precious collections, to sort and catalogue, and to preserve in optimum conditions. One goes down a few floors from the Director's office to find oneself in a pleasant, carpeted gallery, built round an internal patio open to the sky. In this gallery, exhibitions, for instance of rare books, or illustrated books with the original blocks and associated material, are continually being mounted. Rooms leading off from the gallery are used for the mounting of exhibitions, while the rest of the College collects the past. The University of Texas could not hope to attract some other great American

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John Lehmann on a visit to THE HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

material—manuscripts, typescripts, letters—that was being gathered together to document each of Connolly's choices. A feast for one interested in the background of modern literature, and the creative processes involved.

It is a strange experience to be admitted to one of the rooms where the original material is kept, particularly if some of the boxes contain documents from one's own past activities. One begins to feel posthumous; one begins to imagine that a voice from the skies may at any moment pronounce pitiless judgment; finally, one begins to feel a fraud, and wants to run away.

The collections have not all been acquired by purchase. There have been notable gifts: for instance, the recent gift of the personal library of Alfred and Blanche Knopf, consisting of about 10,000 volumes. A large proportion of these are first editions of books published by them, but there are also important sections of books on the printing and illustration. Apart from that, United States law provides that gifts of valuable material, books, pictures, documents, presented to public institutions, can be counted against income tax. In this way, the Humanities Research Centre has acquired the archives and original manuscripts, proofs, and so on, of such outstanding modern American dramatists as Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams and Lillian Hellman—without paying a cent. Would that such intelligent, far-sighted concessions could be made in British law for the benefit of British libraries and institutions.

The Academic Centre Library is not the only department the Humanities Research Centre and the University of Texas have reason to be proud of. The Stark Library, presented in 1926 by Mrs. Miriam Luther Stark, provided a treasure of nearly 10,000 volumes of rare books in English and American literature, mainly of authors born before 1830, which included not only first editions but associated manuscripts. In the Stark Library is now housed all the material connected with such older authors which has come, and continues to come, from various sources such as the Hanley Library (acquired in 1958) and the Griffith and Stenbergs collections. I remember having a showcase pointed out to me which contained early works connected with Darwin's theory of Natural Selection. I asked whether the library had copies of the work of my great-grandfather, Robert Chambers, on this subject: I was immediately shown a copy of *Vegetables of the Natural History of Creation* which anticipated Darwin on another shelf.

Another important collection in the field of the humanities is the Hoblitzelle Theatre Arts Library, which contains hundreds of thousands of theatrical programmes, photographs, periodicals and books, as well as original theatrical designs, particularly (so far) of Norman Bel Geddes.

The Humanities Research Centre makes its collections available to bona fide research students and authors from all over the world. Dr. Roberts has told me that one of his chief preoccupations, which absorbs much of his own time and the time of his staff, is seeing that the limiting conditions of the various gifts and purchases are observed. There is the overall condition of copyright, which is often forgotten, applied to the works of letters just as rigorously as to the authors of books. It strikes me that that, are the conditions often attached to acquisition, which allocate that so-and-so letters or other

private papers may not be published—or sometimes even studied—until, say, the year 2000, or possibly the year 2050. Dark are the cellars (though air-conditioned) which house these arcana below the tower of the campus.

The University does its best to make its treasures known by frequent exhibitions and publications of every kind. On the occasion of the acceptance of the academic centre and undergraduate libraries by the Board of Regents, in November, 1964, the H.R.C. published an elegant illustrated booklet to give a glimpse of what they had already acquired in the way of modern (twentieth-century) manuscripts. It makes one's mouth water, and of course one cannot give a full account of all that it contained. But of 100 items described, these are some of the authors: W. H. Auden (*The Age of Anxiety*), Samuel Beckett (*Molloy*), Saul Bellow (*Selzer's Day*), Joseph Conrad (*Victory*), Hart Crane (*The Bridge*), Lawrence Durrell (*A Private Country*), William Faulkner (*Abraham!*), E. M. Forster (*A Passage to India*), John Galsworthy (*Lloyds*), Graham Greene (*The Power and the Glory*), Ernest Hemingway (*Death in the Afternoon*), D. H. Lawrence (*Sons and Lovers*), Aldous Huxley

Westward ho!

A. N. L. MUNBY and L. W. TOWNER: *The Flow of Books and Manuscripts*. 60pp. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.

If anyone wants to put in perspective—both that of history and of common sense—the persistently erupting problem of controlling the export of books and, particularly, manuscripts, historical documents and autograph letters, let him apply forthwith to the Clark Librarian at Los Angeles for a copy of Dr. Munby's paper. Here, with the case of the Caxton Ovid as an ear-catching peg, he will find as fully informed, factually detailed, lucidly expounded and soberly judged a set of "Reflections on the Legislation Controlling the Export of Works of Art from Great Britain" as any one living could compress into less than thirty pages. It ought to be compulsory reading for the working party set up by Miss Jennie Lee to do all over again the work that Dr. Esmond de Beer's authoritative committee spent a dedicated six months doing last year.

Meanwhile, even without the three postscripts (the last one added from Cambridge in April) documenting the past twelve months' developments, Dr. Munby gave his original audience, and has now in print given a much wider one, a thoroughly reliable and realistic exposition of the history and *modus operandi* of the control regulations: regulations which in the United States especially (and not only in the United States) have been more heatedly discussed than widely understood. (A note, immediately topical and remarkably forthright, views of the Marquand Bill will be found in the editorial article in the summer number of *The Book Collector*.) Dr. Munby's colleague at the Los Angeles seminar was the Director of the Newberry Library, Chicago, with a discourse entitled "Library Silver

(*Brave New World*, James H. Hunter set of corrected *Ulysses*), Sean O'Casey (*Tossie*), Bernard Shaw (*Edith Sitwell*), Lytton Strachey (*Victorian*), W. B. Yeats (*The Saint*).

Again, during British War, the H.R.C. debt to their own literary past on a magnificent exhibit, its minimal, International in outlook, manuscripts and portraits, often serious and seemingly intellectually authors, from Chaucer and Marlowe to Keynes and Max Beer, to the sense of the absurd and ridiculous described in a superb catalogue. They are also very much caught up in the flow of literary innovation, Mr. David Marquand, and endeavoured, so far as unassuming techniques, in particular, have to introduce a Bill in Parliament incorporated into their work prevent, or delay, the export and have played a decisive, shaping

abroad. Mr. Marquand said: "Herr Lettau himself is a writer with the Bill, if passed, would be a considerable imaginative talent which serious infringement of the past. He has written some verse, that there are times when he first attracted attention some ests of the community as years ago with two small volumes of must override these rights, most impressive prose pieces whose

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our archives on this side of the but they were fast asleep until awake them, and it is still not that English manuscripts can-atically find an English buye my opinion, the English-sp world is one; and English au- not so rich, as a community, let the more than modest inter- their earnings that these great can institutions offer.

Lining has a Cloud". Dr. Towner account of "the recent slight Newberry's collections will be interest not only to other custodians rare books and special collections also to bookellers, to auctioneers and to owners of such collections who may be thinking of an occasional sale. For he gives us, with occasionally a slightly derailing in his voice, a candid narrative of the financial jugglery by which the library, or buying in bulk, extruded the least or irrelevant material from classes or (by permission) from and bequests—has within the five years taken into its custody the much-discussed *Leviathan* Silver collection, which Dr. Towner's title, but also Evan Williams, Barker inflicts Evan and his wildest opponent with the sort of inelegant, silted dialogue which comes of persistent but unsuccessful attempts to achieve an acid tone of phrase. The Gabriel Sack's collection of the two following centuries, Dr. J. Francis Driscoll collected 83,000 pieces of American music.

Although Dr. Towner says, "We wish to avoid book dealers ourselves", his shrewd appreciation of the commercial possibilities of the ambitious and realistic library, in a leaf of two from the last game, Mr. Edwin W. Philadelphia. He writes, "The sale of the Silver Marquand collection of the 'Graft' duplicates, the alternative to the private sale, is a one transaction in which the collection in the Newberry is placed to the advantage of private treaty sale, and of course, the Newberry Library, Chicago, with a discourse entitled "Library Silver

The mad and the military

REINHARD LETTAU: *Feinde*. 78pp. Munich: Hanser. DM 5.80.

Reinhard Lettau belongs to a new generation of German writers whose latest debt to their own literary past on a magnificent exhibit, its minimal, International in outlook, manuscripts and portraits, often serious and seemingly intellectually authors, from Chaucer and Marlowe to Keynes and Max Beer, to the sense of the absurd and ridiculous described in a superb catalogue. They are also very much caught up in the flow of literary innovation, Mr. David Marquand, and endeavoured, so far as unassuming techniques, in particular, have to introduce a Bill in Parliament incorporated into their work prevent, or delay, the export and have played a decisive, shaping

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principal characters: three alternating voices, as much concerned with the past as with the present. Daisy, recently widowed, is cautiously involving herself with an architect, Adam, whom she first met when he was committing "technical adultery" in a house she once owned. The arrival of Olavi, the third character, brings complications; he owes his life to Adam, who fought alongside him during the war against Russia, but Adam later cuckolded him, and this has not been forgiven. The complex emotional problems and responsibilities of these three are dealt with sensitively enough; but none of them seems to find a convincingly individual tone. Daisy's monologue is full of scraps of personal "code", odd phraseology and sudden contractions, which makes it, at times, almost indistinguishable from Olavi's pidgin, though poetic. English, Adam's share of the narrative is similarly infected, so that we come to recognize a single voice—that of the author—and, in the end, Mr. Christy's persistence leaves him standing four-square between his characters and the reader.

EUGENE MIRABELLI: *The Way In*. 217pp. Chatto and Windus. 25s.

Remarkable, perhaps, for its comparative mildness of tone, *The Way In* exercises an insidious and finely calculated hold on the reader's attention. Its effect is cumulative: the result of apparently random memories noted down by Frank Annunzio who, from the outset, makes it clear that he is addressing the reader rather than indulging in any form of cerebral self-abuse or emotional exorcism. "I, Frank Annunzio, tell you this story"—the first sentence in the book assures us that this will be no marathon of total recall. But oracles of his grandparents, of his parents' early lives, of his own childhood and young manhood—linked with descriptive passages, de-linked, because the pattern of present life, but somehow, the parts fall add up to the expected total. This problem seems to be almost entirely solved by Mr. Christy's inability to find a way with which he is comfortable the narrative is shared between three

parts of *No Time Like the Past* how Roy Christy to be capable of producing moments of honest and painful insight; the novel is aimed with care and skill, minor characters are nicely judged, and the humour has an appropriate sourness. But somehow, the parts fall add up to the expected total. This problem seems to be almost entirely solved by Mr. Christy's inability to find a way with which he is comfortable the narrative is shared between three

Curious corpses

GEORGES PERREC: *La Disparition*. 319pp. Paris: Denoël. 19.60fr.

Georges Perrec states in the pre-script of his novel that he deliberately set out to be "original" and "unpleasant". He wished to create something that had "un pouvoir stimulant sur la construction, la narration, l'affabulation, l'action, disons, d'un mot, sur la façon du roman d'aujourd'hui." What he also wanted to create and has done, at astonishing length—is a novel from which the letter "e" has been excluded.

Outwardly *La Disparition* is a fairly conventional mystery story. A man disappears for no apparent reason, leaving behind a few meaningless clues that everyone tries to take seriously. His disappearance is followed by the deaths of almost all the other characters until the final denouement and explanation of the bizarre, corpse-laden events. This explanation is in the form of a series of flashbacks and reminiscences that take up most of the novel: much of the action described has already taken place in the past. The story that emerges is of a grotesque and implausible family vendetta originating in Eastern Europe, involving a retired English officer, a Hollywood star, a drug ring, mountain bandits and other elements of contemporary myth-making.

There is nothing very original in the gratuitousness of the "affabulation" and the "action". On the other hand the style of the narration more than compensates for its insufferable. The narrative is divided with poems, parodies of poems, short stories, all of which contribute to the telling impression of insecurity, of intangibility that whispers away to nothing at the end. It is the effective collage of stylistic tours de force and not the obscurity of the plot that creates the enigma of the disappearance. At times slangy, racy, poetic or stily formal, the linguistic virtuosity is deeply compelling.

WALLIA PRINCIPATUS

In 1648 the multi-volume *Atlas Novus* was published by Blaeu, the Amsterdam firm of map makers. The Times has selected *Wallia Principatus* as a readers' memento of the investiture of the Prince of Wales. This reproduction of the principality of Wales has been lightly coloured to add emphasis to the fine copper engraved line work and lettering. Heraldic motifs are used to enhance the map. It is printed on "antique" cartridge paper, measures 24" x 20", and is ideal for framing.

Copies are available to readers at 19s. 6d., post free, and are packed in heavy duty rolls to prevent creasing. Readers should allow two weeks for delivery.

Orders should be sent to the Publications Department, Times Newspapers Ltd., Printing House Square, London, E.C.4.

Please fill in your name and address twice in block capitals. Please send me.....copies of *Wallia Principatus* at 19s. 6d. each. I enclose £.....to be repaid by postal orders payable to Times Newspapers Ltd.)

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